

FINLAND SHOULD ENACT THE WORLD'S STRONGEST CLIMATE CHANGE ACT

We, the undersigned Finnish youth organisations, demand that the Finnish Climate Change Act be reformed to become the strongest and most ambitious in the world, reflecting Finland's desire to emerge as a global leader in the work against climate change.

Climate change threatens all humankind and all life on our planet as we know it. It has negative effects on our ecological, social and financial environments. The people who are already in the weakest position are the ones at the greatest risk.

Even though climate change concerns everyone, it affects us the young people and our future above all. The longer we delay the mitigation of climate change, the more serious effects it will have.

For us to keep our planet habitable and ensure the conditions of good life in the future, too, we must act now. We must start rebuilding society in a way that takes the ecological limits of the Earth into account. The Climate Change Act must be made more rigorous because the climate action taken so far is insufficient.

We, the undersigned youth organisations, demand the following items, numbered 1 through 5, to be included in the reformed Climate Change Act.

Calling for change,
Finnish Agenda2030 Youth Group and UN Youth Finland in cooperation with:

350 Suomi ry
Aseistakieltäytyjäliitto
Biosfääri ry
Changemaker
Climate Move
Dodo ry
Eurooppanuoret
European Youth Parliament Finland – EYP
F*NO Feministiset Nuoret ja Opiskelijat
Fridays for Future Suomi
FinMUN
Helsingin YK-nuoret
Helsingin yliopiston ylioppilaskunnan Vihreät
Helsingin yliopiston ylioppilaskunta
Hiilivapaa Suomi
Joensuu seudun monikulttuurisuusyhdistys ry
Jyväskylän YK-yhdistys
Keskustanuoret
Kokoomuksen Opiskelijaliitto Tuhatkunta ry
Kokoomusnuoret
Kuopion ilmastonuoret/Luonnonystävät-toimintaryhmä
Luonto-Liitto
Nuorten ilmastodelegaatit, Allianssi ry
Nuorten YK-delegaatti, Allianssi ry
Nuorten Suomi ry

Nyyti ry
Parecon Finland
Piraattinuoret
Plan International Suomi
Pohjola-Nordenin Nuorisoliitto
Sosialidemokraattiset nuoret
Suoma Sámi Nuorat
Suomen 4H-liitto
Suomen Ammattiin Opiskelevien Liitto – SAKKI ry
Suomen Kristillisdemokraattiset Nuoret
Suomen Lukiolaisten Liitto
Suomen Nuorisovaltuustojen Liitto
Suomen Opiskelija-Allianssi – OSKU ry
Suomen Opiskelijakuntien Liitto – SAMOK ry
Suomen Partiolaiset – Finlands Scouter ry
Suomen Sadankomitea ry
Suomen Yhteiskunta-alojen Ylioppilaat
Suomen ylioppilaskuntien liitto – SYL ry
Svensk Ungdom – RKP-nuoret
Tampereen YK-yhdistys
Turun YK-yhdistys
Turun yliopiston ylioppilaskunta
Vihreiden nuorten ja opiskelijoiden liitto
Vasemmistonuoret
WWF Nuoret



1. The Climate Change Act must include a binding obligation for Finland to achieve carbon neutrality by 2035 and carbon negativity soon thereafter

The act must include binding intermediate goals to ensure that the 2035 carbon neutrality goal is achieved. The intermediate goals also provide climate policy with continuity and ensure intergenerational justice.

The act must clearly define carbon neutrality and the formula for calculating it, that is, it must define how the emissions of all the different operators in society are calculated.

The tasks of the authorities listed in section 15 of the act must be supplemented with provisions for each ministry listed in section 15 as the responsible party to ensure, for their part, the realisation of the emissions reduction goals by 2035 and beyond. This includes an obligation for the Prime Minister's Office to observe ownership steering policies that are in line with the climate goals and, for instance, vote for decisions that are in accordance with the emissions reduction goals set in the Paris Agreement when voting in the general meetings of companies. A decision in principle on sustainable ownership steering is not sufficient by itself.

The Climate Change Act as a whole must be developed to make it more binding to ensure that its goals are reached.

In all measures included in the act, social sustainability must be taken into account and a fair transition into a carbon-neutral welfare society ensured. The climate action must contribute to the protection of natural diversity.

2. The new Climate Change Act must adhere to the mitigation hierarchy for emissions

As per the mitigation hierarchy, Finland must primarily reduce its emissions. Carbon offsets must only be used as a final resort when striving to achieve carbon neutrality.

Finland must primarily reduce its emissions by reducing the consumption of fossil fuels. In addition to the already established ban on coal, the act must include a plan for abandoning other fossil fuels by 2030, too.

Finland cannot be satisfied with reducing only the emissions originating within its borders. In the Climate Change Act, Finland must take responsibility for its outsourced emissions as well.

The emissions that cannot be reduced must be compensated for by increasing carbon sinks within Finland. Finland must not lean on foreign compensations when trying to reach its climate goals. The Climate Change Act must commit Finland to increasing its carbon sinks and define ambitious goals for their growth.



3. The new Climate Change Act must guarantee youth participation in decision-making processes on climate policy

Youth participation must be increased and supported. Young people must be heard in the planning and execution stages of decision-making processes concerning the climate. Progress on the climate goals must be reported in a manner that engages young people, in channels that they use.

The government must establish an independent body consisting of young people to support climate policy planning and related decision-making processes. The act must include the obligation to consult the youth body and the right for the youth body to issue statements whenever goals or indicators covered by the act are established or reported on as well as when the act is being updated.

4. The Climate Change Act must guarantee sufficient opportunities for citizens to access information and participate in decision-making processes concerning their living environment

Information on Finland's decision-making processes on climate policy as well as the progress towards its emissions reduction goals must be easily, transparently and continuously available to everyone.

The Annual Climate Report must be developed so that it would form an overall picture of the state of Finland's climate policy. In the future, it should also report on Finland's outsourced emissions. In addition to this, the Annual Climate Report must review the climate policy measures on the land use and emissions trading sectors. The Annual Climate Report must be strengthened in connection with reforming the Climate Change Act, and its accessibility must be improved.

The new Climate Change Act must ensure that citizens have strong opportunities to participate in decision-making processes on climate policy. The Climate Change Act must set an obligation to engage people when setting climate policy goals and their indicators as well as when executing climate policy plans. The new Climate Change Act must guarantee that all administrative branches provide citizens with equal opportunities to participate.

Especially those in the weakest position, who are hit the hardest by the effects of climate change, must be heard. Regional equality must also be realised when consulting citizens, and consultations must be organised all over Finland in easily accessible locations. Accessibility must be taken into account in the consultations.

5. The Climate Change Act must strengthen the role of the Finnish Climate Change Panel in Finland's climate policy

The goals set in the act must be based on science, and the Finnish Climate Change Panel must be consulted when choosing climate policy measures.

The Climate Change Act must ensure that the Finnish Climate Change Panel has sufficient resources to fulfil its purpose while the panellists can simultaneously act as active members of the scientific community.

